

THE OUTLOOK FOR NUTRACEUTICALS AND FUNCTIONAL FOODS

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Speech Outline

- 1) Definitions of functional foods and nutraceuticals.
- 2) Overview of Japanese market.
- 3) U.S. retail food sector with subdivisions for functional foods.
- 4) Health trends in USA.
- 5) How interest in phytochemicals and antioxidants brings fruits and vegetables into functional foods arena.
- 6) Overview of health claims in USA.
- 7) Other food industry trends which could benefit the fruit and vegetable sector.

Overview

In the U.S. market, where inflation and population growth are the only ways to increase earnings, functional foods remain of keen interest to food corporations (Aarts, 2000). The challenge is to define exactly what functional foods are and how healthy, convenience trends fit into this market sector. As the U.S. population ages (1996—33% 45 yr. + to 2030—42% 45 yr.+) health concerns increase with “positive eating” and “self care” becoming mainstream (Sloan, 2000).

U.S. functional food sales reached \$14.8 billion in 1998 or 3% of retail food sales; mainly from beverages, energy bars and dairy products. The natural/organics and “lesser-evil” food categories were over \$50 billion and , therefore, larger than functional foods alone. It is important to realize there are lots of opportunities for growth for the fruit and vegetable sector within the “market standard”--\$450 billion.

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